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Sacred Biography.

The Woman of Capernaum.

IF the city of Capernaum had not been the scene of our Savior's ministry and miracles, this woman, like a thousand other converts, would have lived and died in obscurity, and posterity would not have known that such a person existed. But it was her lot to live in a city which was peculiarly honored with the presence of Christ, and which witnessed some of his most splendid miracles. It was still more happy for her, that she experienced the power of his preaching, and was brought to repentance. The proofs and expressions of her repentance are transmitted to us in these goings down of the sun, to shew what surprizing effects may be wrought, in the temper and the life of a notorious sinner, by divine grace. Her repentance will be held up to mankind, from age to age, as a monument of divine power.

The incident which brought her into view, is stated in the 7th chapter of Luke.—The city of Capernaum was the place of our Lord's ordinary residence. There he cured the centurion's servant, and afterwards reasoned with the people on the character of John the Baptist. Among those who heard him, was a Pharisee, whose name was Simon, and who probably lived in a better fashion than the generality of the people. Simon invited Jesus to his house. It was the custom of ourSavior not to refuse those hospitalities which were offered, because they afforded occasions of administering some salutary instruction or warning. He was employed in the work of his heavenly mission, even when he sat at meat with publicans and sinners. While at dinner in Simon's house, a woman of that city came with an

alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hair of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.

Two things are worthy of consideration in the account of this woman.

I. Her former character.

II. The proofs and expressions of her repentance.

I. She was a sinner. "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment." But if we had no other intimation of her former character, we should see nothing in her, different from many others; and all others, who are not subjects of regenerating grace. It is probable the Pharisee, into whose house she entered, was a sinner likewise; and, for any thing we know, he lived and died without any interest in the favor of God. But there was something in the character of this woman which distinguished her from the ordinary class of sinners who dwelt in Capernaum: for, it appears, that the Pharisee deemed her to be such a character that it was not proper for him to have any intercourse with her. It is probable, that she was an open sinner, perhaps a prostitute, and that her impurities had been a matter of public notoriety. The whole city of Capernaum, it may be, had witnessed the poisonous example of her prostitution.—She had involved others in her crimes; and, by her scandalous conduct, she alone perhaps was an instrument of bringing ruin upon the souls of many of the inhabitants of that city.

But God was pleased to arrest her in her criminality, and expose to her the amazing guilt which she had contracted. This person, on whom habits of sin had become firmly fixed, he determined to make an example of purity. By enlightening her mind in the knowledge of his law, he made her see that her soul was utterly polluted and loathsome; that she had prostituted her faculties to the vilest of purposes; and that she was ruined and condemned. She doubtless saw that God would be just in casting her off, and that it must be surprizing grace which could wash away such deep stains of guilt, and recover such a polluted criminal to his favor.

This, it appears, was her character. To say the least, she was an open sinner, if we may judge by the views which the Pharisee had of her character; for he thought that if Jesus knew what her character was, he would not even suffer her to be in his society.

II. Let us consider the proofs and expressions of her repentance.

1. She desired to see Jesus. By some divine influence on her mind, Christ had been revealed to her as the friend and Savior of sinners. This was just such a friend as she needed, and such as she desired to be acquainted with.—Convinced that she had brought guilt and ruin upon herself, she had heard that Christ was manifested to take away the guilt of sin, and that he could restore her to the forfeited favor of God. No sooner did she hear of such a character, than she desired to be made acquainted with him. She burst through all the restraints which shame and reproach had imposed upon her, to acquaint herself with one who was manifested as the Remedy for sinners.

Behold, reader, the nature of true repentance. Those who are convinced of their guilt, will, at once, see that they need some effectual remedy, or they must perish. Every hope that they can recover the favor of God, and obtain eternal life, is slain; and if they are left to themselves, they can have no other prospect than that of everlasting ruin.—They learn, that Jesus Christ is such a remedy as their condition requires; and therefore they desire to be acquainted with him. For this end, they will study the word of God, to obtain an acquaintance with the friend of sinners.

2. Another proof of her repentance was her tears. These flowed in unusual abundance, sufficient to wash the Savior's feet. She stood behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears. These were tears both of sorrow and gratitude. We know that persons may have sorrow for sin which arises from fear only. They are afraid that they shall suffer the wrath of God on account of sin, and for this reason, they are sorry that they have sinned and exposed themselves to punishment. This sorrow is a kind of horror, but not grief; and it does not usually produce tears. This woman was grieved in the view of her past conduct. Recollecting how she had dishonored God whose mercy had held her up, and that perhaps her example had involv-

ed others in guilt and ruin, her heart, formerly hard and carnal, but now sensible of the evil of sin, was melted with godly sorrow. The sight of Jesus, that heavenly Benefactor, who came to seek and save that which was lost, served to increase her sense of the criminality of sin, and to accelerate the current of her tears. We know that gratitude for some signal favor, as well as sorrow, will cause tears to flow in copious streams. The tears of this woman were tears of gratitude. She saw Jesus who came to procure the greatest benefits for mankind, and one who exposed himself to the greatest pains and reproaches to purchase this good. While therefore her heart was penetrated with grief for her misconduct, the current of her grief was increased by a grateful sense of what Jesus had done for her soul, and for the souls of other sinners. Thus true penitents are not only sorry that they have exposed themselves to the effects of God's displeasure: but they are grieved that they have dishonored him, and abused infinite mercy.

3. The humility of her deportment was an expression of her repentance. She "came behind" Jesus. A sense of her impurities, her guilt and vileness, so overwhelmed her soul that she had not confidence to look her abused Savior in the face. Though she ardently desired to see, and be acquainted with one who had procured remission of the foulest sins; yet, confounded, and ashamed of her past misconduct, she could not stand before him; but came and stood behind, weeping, and washed his feet with tears.

Infidels have cavilled at this piece of Scripture history. They say, it was an awkward way for her to come behind Jesus to wash his feet while he sat at meat. But they do not consider, or they do not know, that the eastern people, in our Savior's time, and even now, do not sit at a table to eat, as we do. They lay on couches reclined upon one elbow, with their feet extended behind them. Therefore it was natural for the woman to come behind in order to wash his feet.

See, reader, the nature of true repentance. "Surely after that I was turned, I repented: and after that I was instructed I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

4. The reality of her repentance appears in this: She wished to devote to the honor of Christ those things which

had been instruments of pride and lust in her unconverted state. Not only did she wash the Savior's feet with tears, but she wiped them with the hair of her head. That hair which she once adorned and adjusted with the greatest care, that hair which had been used as a mean of cherishing pride, insnaring innocence, and procuring unhallowed lovers, was converted to a towel to wipe the Savior's feet. In short, her conduct indicated a mind overwhelmed with a sense of personal unworthiness, willing to stoop to the meanest services to her injured Lord and Redeemer, and anxious to do something which would be a testimony of her gratitude for the unspeakable benefits of redeeming love.

True penitents desire to dedicate to the service and honor of God, all those faculties and organs, which, in their impenitent state were used as instruments of sin.

5. Her repentance appears in the open and undisguised manner in which she appeared at the house of the Pharisee. Hypocrites and sinners, if they feel a degree of shame for their immoralities and scandals, usually conceal as much of their vice as they can, and avoid those people who have been witnesses of their misconduct. With what difficulty is an open confession drawn from some who are professors of religion! How unwilling are they to do any thing which might be considered as an acknowledgment of their faults! But this penitent woman took those steps which would make her shame,and regret, and self-condemnation, extensively known; steps which she knew would expose her to public obloquy and reproach. She knew that the proud and self-righteous Pharisee, into whose house she entered, would treat her with disdain, and probably spread abroad the report of her shame as extensively as possible: but she did not regard the reproach of men. As the city of Capernaum had witnessed her impurities and scandal, she was willing that it should also be acquainted with her sorrow and shame.

All who have a just sense and abhorrence of sin, and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, will rise superior to the dread of being meanly thought of by their fellow creatures.

6. Her love to Christ, after all, was the most indubitable proof of her repentance. Love to Christ will always bear some proportion to the benefits which we receive from

him. If we have a sense of the ruinous nature of sin, and consider that Christ came to deliver us from the most wretched condition, and restore us to the divine favor, such views are calculated to enkindle a proportionable flame of love in our souls. Those who have a sense of the infinite malignity of sin, will be likely to love much; and those who consider it to be a trifling evil, will love but little. Here is the difference between true penitents and hypocrites; and this difference was exemplified in the conduct of the Pharisee and of the woman. The former invited Jesus to his house, that he might make a shew of his hospitality. The latter sought him there, that she might testify her self-abhorrence, and her sense of his unspeakable benefits. The conduct of the Pharisee indicated the cold civilities of one, who supposed that he was conferring, rather than receiving, a favor. Hers was an expression of the unfeigned and ardent love of one who realized that her obligation to the Savior was infinitely great.

Christ intimated to the Pharisee, that while the conduct of the woman indicated the most ardent love, there was no such expression of love in his. "Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman hath not ceased to kiss my feet. Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

Reader, though you may not be guilty of the open impurities of this woman; yet you are a sinner by nature: for the whole world lieth in wickedness. As a sinner, you must repent, or perish.

See the fruits and the evidences of true repentance in the woman of Capernaum. Examine the frame of your own mind, to see if you have those evidences of repentance, and ground to hope that you have received the pardon of your iniquities, and a title to the inheritance of heaven.

AUGUSTINE.

THE FRUITS OF INQUIRY—No. IV.

The free-agency of man consistent with the foreknowledge of God.

MUCH of the apparent diversity of sentiment among professed christians probably results from an indefinite and ambiguous use of terms. And, perhaps, no one thing would tend more to the increase of knowledge than a strict attention to the import of the words we use in speaking and writing. When we use words without any definite meaning, we cannot be said to communicate knowledge or ideas. Such a manner of speaking or writing is rather an *abuse*, than a *proper use* of language. Not only is it important that we should have a definite meaning to the terms we use, but we should use terms in such a manner, and in such a sense, that others may know what we mean by what we say. If we have occasion to use any term in an unusual sense, our own meaning, in the use of the term, should be clearly explained. Admitting that the communication of knowledge or ideas is the object of writing or speaking, it will readily appear that we may with as much propriety use the terms of an *unknown language*, as to use the terms of our own language in an *unknown sense*.

Attention and care are also necessary on the part of a reader or hearer, to understand the import of what is written or spoken. If a reader would judge with propriety of any proposition or discourse, he should endeavor to avail himself of the real meaning of the writer in his use of any particular terms; and not, with a view to find fault, affix a different meaning to words from that which the writer had in view. If the writer have defined his own terms or explained his meaning, this definition or explanation should be strictly regarded by the reader.

The object of this number is to illustrate the truth of an important proposition; and one which is disbelieved by some persons, and by others it is viewed as very abstruse. The proposition is this—

That the perfect foreknowledge of God is consistent with the free-agency of mankind.

The terms *foreknowledge* and *free-agency* are the principal terms in the proposition. And it never can be known what is affirmed in the proposition, unless the meaning of these terms can be understood. But if we can obtain a

clear and distinct idea of the import of these terms, the import of the proposition will be obvious, and, I trust, its truth will be easily illustrated.

The term fore-knowledge may be used in two different senses.

1. By the foreknowledge of God, may be meant his eternal *foresight* of every thing which it would be best for him to do, to cause, or permit to be done. Such a perfect foresight of all that would on the whole be for the best, must be implied in the wisdom and omniscience of God.

2. By the foreknowledge of God may be intended that *certainty* which ever existed in the divine mind, respecting the future existence of all events.

To *foresee* that it *will be best* that an event *should take place*, is a distinct idea from *foreknowing* that the *event will certainly take place*. A prophet may foreknow that an event will take place, and yet not be able to foresee how the event will on the whole be for the best.

Both these kinds of foreknowledge are supposed to be in God, in a perfect and absolute manner; and both will be considered as consistent with the free-agency of man. This word is generally used at the present day, in the latter sense of the term; but it may be doubted whether this be the sense of the term as it is used in Scripture.

I do not recollect that the word foreknowledge is used but twice in the Bible. It is used 1 Peter, i. 2. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." In this case the foreknowledge of God seems to be spoken of as a *rule* or *standard* for election, Elect *according* to the *foreknowledge* of God. And if by foreknowledge we understand the divine *foresight of whatever would be best*, it is very natural to suppose that election proceeded according to this standard—God doubtless had reasons for election, and his infinite foresight of all that would, on the whole, be for the best, must involve the reasons for election. But a mere foresight, that events would *certainly take place*, does not appear to be a proper ground for election.

The same word is used Acts ii. 23. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." In this case the term foreknowledge is of doubtful import. It may intend either a foresight of what would on the whole be best, or it may intend a foreknowledge that the event would take place. Christ was undoubtedly delivered ac-

cording to the foreknowledge of God in both senses of the word. The only reason which can be given, that I am aware of, why the last sense of the term should be preferred, in this instance, is that foreknowledge is placed in the sentence after the *determinate counsel.* Foreknowledge in the first sense of the term seems to be prior, in the order of nature, to the divine purpose; and the divine purpose must be prior in the order of nature, to the foreknowledge of an event in the second sense of the word. God's foreseeing that it will be best that a certain event should take place, is a sufficient reason why he should determine its existence. But no reason can be given for God's foreknowing that an event *will in fact have existence*, but his having pre-determined that it shall take place. Therefore, when the question is asked, which is first in the order of nature, the divine foreknowledge, or the divine purpose? it becomes important to ask the inquirer, in what sense he uses the term foreknowledge. If he shall say that by foreknowledge he means a divine *foresight of what would be best*, we may say, that foreknowledge is prior to the divine purpose. But if he shall say that by foreknowledge he means a foresight that events *will certainly take place*, we may say the purpose of God is, in the order of nature, prior to foreknowledge.

Having considered the twofold import of the term foreknowledge, I may now attempt to explain the term *free-agency.* As the Repository is not the place for controversy, nor for lengthy metaphysical discussion, I shall endeavor, in the most familiar manner, to state what I conceive to be usually implied in the use of the term *free-agency;* and *this* without remarking on the various definitions of others.

The Scriptures favor us with two forms of speech, which may be of use in this case, viz. "*They have chosen their own ways*," and "*thou didst well in that it was in thy heart.*"

No one, I think, will deny that *choosing our own ways*, is strictly *free-agency.* And if choosing an object, or a course of conduct, which is agreeable to our own hearts, is free-agency, then, in ascertaining what free-agency is, we have nothing to do with any thing which may be considered as an extrinsic cause of the event.

The words of God to David, are also worthy of notice. David had formed a purpose to build a temple for the worship of God. And the Lord said unto David, "whereas it was in thy heart to build an house to my name, thou DIDST WELL in that it was in thy heart. Nevertheless, thou shalt not bui'd the house, but thy son," &c. The purpose or free choice of David to build the house, was considered by God as an *act* worthy of approbation, Thou DIDST WELL. David's free agency did not consist in any thing that was prior to the choice or purpose of his heart, nor did it consist in his being allowed to proceed according to his purpose, for he was in fact prevented from executing his design.

This account of free agency, it is thought, will accord with the common sense of mankind. By common consent a man is considered as acting freely in *choosing* to do good or *choosing* to do evil whether he be able to execute his choice or not. Paul and Silas, while confined in prison and bound with fetters, might form the purpose of resuming their benevolent labors, as soon as they should be set at liberty. In forming this purpose they might exercise all the free agency which would be necessary to the approbation of God. A malicious man, in a similar state of confinement, may form the purpose of committing murder. This is *free* and *criminal agency*, whether he ever execute his design, or not. This account of free agency also accords with the following words of Christ, He that looketh on a woman to *lust* after her, hath *committed adultery* already with her *in his heart*.

Free agency then consists in the free, voluntary exercises of the heart.

We have now to shew that the free agency of man is consistent with the perfect foreknowledge of God. For this purpose I will submit to examination the following observations.

1. That the foreknowledge of God and the free agency of man are consistent with each other, may be argued from the evidence we have that both of them *do in fact exist*. If they were inconsistent with each other, the proof that one of them *does exist* would amount to proof that the other *does not exist*; but if evidence can be produced that *both do exist*, this evidence will go to prove that they are consistent with each other.

That free agency does exist must be obvious to every man of common sense from his own experience. It may be presumed that no man of common understanding can be found who is not conscious of choosing his own ways, or of having voluntary exercises of heart.

We have not the same kind of evidence of the foreknowledge of God, that we have of the free agency of man. But those who rely on the Scriptures as a *divine revelation*, or even a correct source of information, may find sufficient evdence that God has foreknown the free actions of men. That God has foreknown the free actions of men appears from the circumstance of his having foretold them, or caused them to be foretold. To prove that divine foreknowledge and free agency are consistent with each other, it is not necessary to prove that every free act of man was foreknown by God. If it can be proved that in one instance God did *foreknow* a *free action* of man, this will show that free agency and foreknowledge are not inconsistent with each other. The Scriptures favor us with a multitude of instances to this purpose. From this multitude I shall select one remarkable instance.

In the days of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, "there came a man of God by the word of the Lord to Bethel; and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And the prophet cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar! altar! Thus saith the Lord, Behold a child shall be born of the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall he offer the Priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee." According to the Bible chronology, this prediction was uttered more than 300 years before Josiah was born. But in the course of his reign the prediction was fulfilled. "And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were there in the mount, and sent and took the bones out of the sepulchre and burnt them upon the altar and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord which the man of God proclaimed."

It may now be asked, did not God foreknow the event predicted? Did not Josiah act freely in fulfilling the prediction? If God did *foreknow* the predicted event; and if Josiah did *act as a free agent*, then foreknowledge and free agency are consistent with each other. And if they may be consistent in one instance, why not in every instance?

2. There is nothing in the nature of free agency which is at all inconsistent with its being an object of foreknowledge—A voluntary action may as properly be an object of foreknowledge as a mechanical motion or any other event. By knowing the general character of a man, his habits, and his circumstances, we may come near to foreknowing what he will choose in many proposed cases—And by this approach to foreknowledge, we often indulge ourselves in foretelling events; and we are enabled, by this approach to foreknowledge, respecting the free agency of others, to lay our own plans to advantage, for the avoidance of apprehended danger, or for the attainment of some benefit. And could we, in any given case, absolutely foreknow what our friend, or our enemy, will choose to-morrow, this foreknowledge could not at all interfere with his free agency. It might enable us to prevent an enemy from *doing* us an injury, but it would not prevent him from *choosing* to do it. And if our foreknowledge of what will be his choice could not preclude the *existence* of the *choice foreknown*, it could not preclude *free agency*. Elisha's foreknowledge of what Hazael would do to his master, and to the people of Israel, was perfectly consistent with Hazael's acting *freely* according to the divine prediction. And the foreknowledge of God is no more inconsistent with free agency than the foreknowledge of man.

3. It is very desirable that the foreknowledge of God should be consistent with the free agency of man.

It is desirable that men should be free agents, and it is as desirable that all their free agency should be perfectly foreknown by God. It appears desirable that God should possess an eternal foresight respecting the nature and importance of the free actions of men, and what actions it would be best, all things considered, should have existence. Without a perfect foresight of whatever would be on the whole for the best, it would be impossible that his plan of operation should be perfect in wisdom. And as it appears important that he should have a perfect foresight of what would on the whole be for the best, it appears equally desirable that he should have a perfect foreknowledge respecting the *existence of events*. The free actions of men are among the most interesting of all the events which take place in this world. And if these events were not the objects of divine foreknowledge, it must be difficult to con-

ceive how it might be otherwise than that God should be continually in a state of embarrassment with respect to making arrangements for a future day. It would be with him as it is with us who know not what will be on the morrow. The opinion, therefore, that God, does not foreknow the free actions of men, appears inconsistent not only with the omniscience of God but with the idea of his being completely happy.

Much more might be pertinently added on the subject, but it is hoped that what has been said will be sufficient to supercede the necessity of our adopting the extraordinary hypotheses of DR. GREGORY. In the last chapter of his valuable work entitled the "ECONOMY OF NATURE" he has brought into view the subject of divine foreknowledge and free agency, and has advanced this hypothesis—THAT GOD DISPENSES WITH HIS PRESCIENCE IN RESPECT TO THE FREE ACTIONS OF MEN, THAT THEY MAY BE FREE. He has not indeed told us very distinctly what he means by God's "dispensing with his prescience" or foreknowledge. He may suppose that God had once this foreknowledge, and then laid it aside, divested himself of it, or suspended its exercise. Or, he may mean that God *might have had* a foreknowledge of the free actions of men, if he had *thought proper to look into the matter*, but apprehending such an attainment would be inconsistent with the free agency of man, he judged it to be inexpedient, and so, from benevolence to man, denied himself the acquisition. But it behoves the Doctor, and all who are inclined to embrace his theory, to inquire whether God could, in any sense, dispense with his foreknowledge without dispensing with his omniscience and his happiness; and whether the theory is not in direct contradiction to the language of Scripture and the spirit of prophecy.

RESEARCH.

THOUGHTS,
Occasioned by meditating on Psalm cxix. 59.

"*I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.*"

FAR the greater part of mankind are almost entirely insensible of religious subjects. They have no proper view of the Supreme Being, of the Saviour of the world, of themselves as transgressors, of the evil of sin, of their present situation in relation to a future life, or of the consequences of their conduct. They seem to be as insensible of these subjects as the beasts that perish. In this state of insensibility and moral darkness, there is no hope of them; they will rush on in ignorance to final ruin, and will never awake till it is eternally too late, unless they can be persuaded to take divine subjects into their serious consideration. If they could be prevailed with to do this, there would be hope in their case. The ungodly are always first awakened to a consideration of their ways and their exposedness to evil, before they apply to the Lord Jesus Christ for help. The Psalmist says, that he thought on his ways, and then turned his feet unto God's testimonies. This was the way in which he was brought to serve the Lord.

It is not admitted that any of the actions of the impenitent, before regeneration, are morally right. Previous to this change, their heart is totally sinful. From such a heart, no morally good actions can proceed. "An evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil."—Sinners who consider of their ways, and are awakened, are no better than those in stupidity. Their hearts are wholly under the influence of sin, and all their moral actions are performed from selfish motives. Still this is the method which God adopts to turn the wicked unto his testimonies. His method in this may be wise, and yet the actions of the impenitent, under awakening, may be sinful.

For God to excite the attention of men to religious subjects, and to awaken them before he changes their hearts, seems most consistent with their moral agency. We would not dare to assert, that God cannot change the heart consistently with moral agency, without first enlightening the understanding. But we are warranted to say, that this is

not his usual method with adults. If he is about to bring such into his kingdom of grace, he always, so far as we can judge, calls up their attention to religious subjects. And this seems most consistent with their rational nature. They are capable of perceiving motives, and of being influenced by them, and why should not God deal with them according to their capacity?

If men do not attend to religious subjects, they cannot understand them. They can no more obtain a knowledge of these subjects without their own exertion, than they can obtain a knowledge of the arts and sciences without their own exertion. If the wicked will not attend frequently and seriously to divine subjects, they will remain in ignorance of them. And how can it be expected, that they will imbibe the christian spirit while they remain ignorant of its doctrines and precepts? Will they love and serve an unknown God? Will they either believe his truths or obey his commands, when they understand neither? Will they flee to a Saviour for deliverance, whom they know not?

It is by considering of their ways that men perceive their guilt. All men will acknowledge that they are sinners: But these are only words of course. There is a great difference between a general conviction of our sins, and a clear view of them; between a bare confession of guilt, and a discovery of the plague of the heart. Though all are ready enough to acknowledge that they are sinners, yet the wicked in stupidity do not see that their heart is totally sinful, that they hate God and the Savior. They vainly imagine that they are no outcasts, but that they are on very good terms with their Maker. And can it be expected that they will become religious, so long as they are ignorant of themselves as sinners? Surely they must be thoroughly convinced of their guilt, before they will repent.

By consideration on their ways, sinners discover their danger. Though a wicked world are in the most critical and alarming situation conceivable, yet the fact is, they feel themselves in almost perfect safety. Behold the ungodly all around, sporting on the brink of eternal ruin! How can you account for this? Is it for want of evidence of their danger? No; for there is evidence of this in abundance. There is the Word of Eternal Truth for evidence. Are the wicked unable to comprehend the proof of their danger? No. But having eyes, they see not; having ears,

they hear not; and having hearts, they perceive not. What then is the reason that they do not see their danger, and that they are not alarmed? They will not consider of their ways. And why will they not consider of their ways? Because this would give them a view of their guilt and danger, and such a view would at once blast all their carnal delights. O sinners, in your own view you are in perfect safety; you are not transgressors; you are not under the curse of God's holy law; there is no divine wrath for you to fear. Why then should you make any attempts to escape evil? You see yourselves exposed to none. It would be the most inconsistent thing in nature for you to be alarmed and anxious to escape destruction, while you seemed to yourselves in perfect safety. No: you never will seek after salvation till you are alarmed; and you never will be alarmed till you see your danger; and you never will see your danger unless you think on your ways.

In view of this subject, we see what is the broad road to destruction. It is to live in ignorance of divine subjects; it is to banish from the soul all serious thoughts of God, of Christ, of heaven and hell, of death and judgment, of yourselves as sinners bound to a vast eternity. It is to fix your thoughts upon the trifling concerns of this life, and to be wholly engrossed in them. This is the broad way that leads to hell. It is the beaten path in which most of mankind are travelling to eternity. Though it is a broad road, it is crouded with vast multitudes of immortal souls.

If you wish to go to destruction undisturbed, to pass through this life to a miserable eternity in the easiest way possible, you will be careful never to think on your ways, what you are, what you have done, whither you are going, and what will be your condition in a future life. You will disregard the warnings of God in his word and providence. You will not listen to the instructions of his servants. If at any unhappy moments you should have serious contemplations, you will banish them from your minds as soon as possible. Should you indulge such thoughts, you could not enjoy the pleasures of sin; you would have many painful sensations. You will therefore avoid serious meditation, and perpetually think on the objects, the vain objects of time and sense. I can assure you, that this is the easiest way to hell. But dare you risk the consequences?

Could you be persuaded to take religious subjects into your serious consideration, there would be some reason to hope that you would forsake your sins, and walk in God's testimonies. You would soon be convinced that eternal things are realities, and infinitely important. You would have such a view of your criminal and infinitely dangerous state, as you never had before. You would see yourselves in the hands of an angry God, exposed to his eternal indignation. Such a discovery would excite anxious concern, what you must do to be saved; and in this situation of mind, you might be persuaded to flee to the Lord Jesus Christ for deliverance. But if you remain inattentive to divine subjects, thoughtless and unconcerned, I will direct you to your doom, (See Proverbs xxix. 1.) "He that being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."

O ye thoughtless mortals! you boast of your reason, but you act like the beasts that perish. Your Maker complains of you as being more stupid than they. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." How surprising that you can live inattentive to eternal realities! Look back, you have but just arisen into being. Look forward, and you are to exist forever. Solemn thought! But what is to be your existence beyond this life? Happy or miserable according to your present conduct. Now is your probationary season; now you are forming characters for an endless duration. Everlasting happiness and everlasting misery are suspended on your choice. How soon your condition may be decided, God only knows. And can you, in this momentous situation, suspended between two worlds, heaven and hell, be unconcerned? Can you amuse yourselves with the vanities of the world? Let the criminal condemned to die, let the drowning man, be unconcerned; but O sinners, do not, I beseech you, be inattentive to your situation, exposed to eternal damnation. You now shut your eyes against the light of divine truth; and do you wish to live in moral darkness till your dying day? Do you wish never to see things as they are, till you open your eyes in the eternal world? Awake before it is everlastingly too late.

THEOPHILUS.

Remarks on the Ordinance of Baptism.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

IN the last number of the Repository, I observed an essay on the *Spirit of Unbelief.* The writer observes, and I think with truth, that there are different degrees of unbelief, and various stages in the progress to atheism; that not those only who deny the being of God, and the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, are governed by the spirit of unbelief; but those also who disown the divine authority of Gospel ordinances. He says, the spirit of unbelief will influence people to say, "I don't know what benefit it will be to my children to have them baptized"—And therefore they will practically deny the divine authority of this ordinance.

I could have wished that writer had enlarged on this part of his important subject; not because I suppose he would have convinced those persons who wholly deny infant baptism, and separate themselves from the communion of those churches which practise it; but perhaps he might have convinced Christians of the Congregational order, that unless they dedicate their children to God, by baptism, their practice is inconsistent with their covenant engagements.—It was the more desirable to me that this subject had been pursued a little farther, because there are persons even in our Congregational churches, who neglect, or refuse, to dedicate their children to God in a public manner.

Our churches believe, that before our Savior appeared in the flesh, God had a people visibly in covenant with himself; that this covenant was established with Abraham, and with his seed. In order to know who are intended by Abraham's seed, see Galatians iii. 29. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." This covenant was declared to be everlasting; and therefore it is still in full force. Circumcision was a token of that covenant, as may be seen in Genesis xvii.

If it be true, that God had a visible church before the time of Christ; and if the covenant, made with Abraham, was, in substance, the same with that which professing Christians now take upon themselves; it is certain, that circumcision was, before our Savior's time, what baptism has been since, a seal or token of new covenant blessings. But it was an express ordinance of God, that his people should

circumcise their children. This ordinance has never been revoked; only with the change of the dispensation, there has been a change in the form of the token, from circumcision to baptism. Therefore it is now an ordinance of God in full force, and agreeable to his will, that believing parents should offer their children to him in baptism.

It is not my design to engage in a controversy, or to combat those who have no fellowship with Congregational churches on account of baptism; but to reason with those persons, who, though members of Congregational churches, neglect this ordinance. What opinion shall we form of their conduct? It is an ordinance which those churches receive, that believing parents should dedicate their infant offspring to God in baptism. They believe that they have abundant authority from Scripture in favor of such a practice. It is conceived, that when a person joins such a church, he engages in a very solemn manner to submit to the rules of that church, and to walk in all the ordinances which that church receives as divine. But he neglects or refuses to present his children for baptism. Does he not live in the open violation of his own covenant engagements? This inquiry becomes the more important, when we take into view those tremendous penalties with which God guarded this ordinance among his ancient covenant people. If a Hebrew refused or neglected to put the token of God's covenant upon his children, he was considered as having forfeited all the privileges and blessings of the covenant.—He was treated as a covenant-breaker. "And the uncircumcised man-child, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from my people: he hath broken my covenant."

No one can with reason or safety plead, that it is a matter of indifference, or of small concern, whether he comply with a Gospel ordinance or not. Such ordinances are not to be dispensed with at pleasure. It is a matter of infinite moment to those who have entered into covenant engagements, to walk in all God's ordinances, that they fulfil such engagements to the extent of their ability. To reject a divine ordinance, is as great if not a much greater proof of alienation and disobedience, than the denial of any Gospel doctrine. A compliance with the institutions of Christ, is as necessary a test of subjection to him, as a belief of those doctrines which pertain to our salvation; and the

carnal heart is as much opposed to ordinances as it is to doctrines. Is there not reason then to conclude, with the writer before mentioned, that unbelief is the cause why so many live in the neglect of the ordinance of baptism? The Apostle warns believers to take heed, lest there be in any of them an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. From this cautionary injunction, professing Christians may conclude there is danger of their acting under the influence of this wicked spirit, when they are not sensible of such an influence.

But may not the church extend its charity so far as to bear with those who are unwilling to have their children baptized? Some will say, they are not certain that infant baptism is an ordinance of Christ, though the church to which they belong receive it as a divine ordinance. To ascertain what reply should be made to this inquiry, we must consider that God has, in some sense, committed the guardianship of his sacred ordinances to the churches. It is important that they should guard this awful trust with fidelity, and be watchful that these ordinances are neither disowned nor abused by any of their members. Where will be the end of such charity, if indeed it may be called charity? May it not be carried so far as to subvert all truth and order?—One says he has doubts about infant baptism, and of course he must be indulged in the neglect of this institution.—Another thinks the Lord's supper was but a temporary ordinance, which was to end with the apostles. The church, in the exuberance of her charity, must not reprove him, although he turn away from this ordinance.—A third says, he can find no certain authority in the Bible for keeping any particular day as a Sabbath. He esteems every day alike; and therefore if he attend to the cultivation of his farm, or gathering in his harvest, the church must not deny him the privileges of a good christian.

It cannot be pretended, that doctrines or moral precepts are more sacred than ordinances; and therefore if others deny the doctrine of depravity, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, the divinity of the Savior, the atonement, and justification by grace, the church must charitably retain them in her fellowship. We know not where to set bounds to this principle; and if we allow these indulgences in any degree, the natural tendency of the principle is to subvert all religious truth and order.—Therefore a church which

receives infant baptism as an ordinance of Christ, is bound to see that all its members comply with this ordinance.

Take heed, Christians, lest the ordinances of the Gospel should fall into contempt through your neglect or unbelief.

BEZA.

All Scripture Divinely Inspired.

THAT *all* Scripture is given by divine Inspiration, must be stedfastly maintained. So far as this apostolic maxim is relinquished, we concede to infidels. Let it be conceded that any one passage is not given by divine Inspiration, and we shall be required to concede that another is not, and then a third. Where shall we then stop, or how can we draw a line of distinction between what is given by divine Inspiration, and what is not?

Many things recorded in Scripture were not, originally, spoken by Inspiration; for instance, what passed between the serpent and Eve, and Rebekah's proposal to Jacob to deceive his father and procure the blessing: many other instances might be mentioned. But all these things were, by divine Inspiration, *written* in the sacred Volume. Every one whom God employed in *writing* the Bible, or any part of it, was infallibly guided by the Holy Ghost what to write. So that not the *Speakers*, in every instance, but the *Writers*, in all instances, and in all they wrote, were divinely inspired; and in this sense, *all Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.*

It has been thought by some that when the Apostle said, 1 Cor. vii. 6, 12, 25, *I speak this by permission, and not of commandment; and to the rest speak I, not the Lord:* and *concerning virgins I have no commandment;* he did not speak or write by divine Inspiration. But concerning this, an excellent writer* observes:—"We are by no means to understand, that he did not then speak under the guidance of the divine Spirit. His meaning doubtless was, that, in these cases, he had no previous, express command of Christ, as he had in the case of a man's putting away his wife, or a wife's departing from her husband, to which

* Dr. Trumbull—Twelve discourses on Divine Revelation.

he had reference in the tenth and eleventh verses. To understand him otherwise would contradict the promises of Christ to his Apostles, and their solemn declarations, that the things they spake were the commandments of the Lord. The questions proposed to the Apostle respected conduct in which the order and peace of the church and of families, the convenience and comfort of individuals, and even morality itself, were deeply concerned. Can it be supposed that in such cases, Christ would have his people without infallible direction? Besides, the Apostle insists, that, even in the very cases, concerning which he says he spake *by permission and not of commandment*, he gave his *judgment as one who had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful*; that he spake for the profit of the Corinthians, *for that which is comely*, and that they might *attend upon the Lord without distraction.* But how could he assert these things, if he were not guided by the divine Spirit? Further, he closes the chapter in this manner, *I think I have the Spirit of God.** The Apostle most certainly knew when he had the Spirit of God, otherwise neither he himself, nor others could depend on what he wrote. When, therefore, in his own opinion, he was guided by the Spirit, who will be so bold as to say he was not? Especially, when he considers how soon after, he demands of all who were prophets and spiritual, that they should acknowledge, that the things which he wrote unto the Corinthians, without making the least exception, were *the commandments of the Lord.*"†

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* "*The Greek word* Dŏkō, *here rendered* I think, *is often used to express things positively with entire confidence: as in Luke* xvii. 9. *Acts* xv. 25, 28. *and* xxvi. 9."

† 1 *Corinthians* xiv. 37.

Selections.

[From the London Evangelical Magazine.]

MOTIVES OF MINISTERS.

AN old divine, preaching before an association of ministers, and desiring to quicken them in their regard to the principal end and motive from which they acted, pointed them to the last and awful day of judgment; and having considered Christ the Judge, as seated on his throne, he then, by an elegant prosopopœia, represented him as calling his ministers to an account, inquiring how they had preached, and with what views.

He calls one first, and puts this question to him:—"What did you preach for?" He answers, 'I preached, Lord, that I might keep a very good living left me by my father; and which would have been lost to the family if I had not taken orders.' Christ says to him, "Stand by; thou hast had thy reward."

The question is put to another:—"And what did you preach for?" He replies, 'Lord, I was applauded as a very learned man; and I preached to keep up the reputation of an eloquent orator, and an ingenious preacher.' Christ's answer to him also was, "Stand by; thou hast had thy reward."

The Judge puts the question to a third:—"And what did you preach for?" "Lord, says he, I neither aimed at the great things of this world, though I was thankful for the conveniences of life which thou gavest me, nor did I preach to acquire the character of a wit, or a scholar—but I preached in compassion to souls, and to please and honor thee. My design in preaching was, Lord, that I might win souls to thy blessed Majesty!"—Upon this the Judge called out, "Room, men! Room, angels! Let this man come and sit down with me on my throne, as I am sit down with my Father, on his throne; he has owned and honored me upon earth, and I will own and honor him through all the ages of eternity."

The result of this representation was, that all the ministers went home much affected, resolving, that thro' the help of God, they would mind their work more, and look better to their aims and ends ever after.

That such may be the effect of this paragraph, on the mind of every clerical reader, is the prayer of yours,

A. Z.

Religious Intelligence.

WE learn, that the work of God's Spirit at Pittsford, in Vermont, the last season, has been great and glorious. In one day, upwards of forty were added to the church. The whole number, who have been added, it is said, amounts to about 150. We understand the awakening has extended into West-Rutland. May it extend far and wide.

In some towns in Berkshire county, Massachusetts, there is of late, very special attention to religion. *The Lord is building up Zion, and appearing in his glory.* Let us abound in believing prayer and zealous exertions.

INDIAN MISSION.

THE Rev. Joseph Badger has lately visited the Trustees of the Massachusetts Missionary Society. He gives a very pleasing account of his mission among the Wyandots, on the river Sandusky, near the western end of Lake Erie. Preparatory to his stated residence among them, he proposed to the Chiefs and Warriors of the nation to use no more ardent spirits. His proposal, they adopted; and soon after, they made a formal request to the Western Missionary Society to be supplied with a Missionary and Schoolmaster. Mr. Badger was accordingly appointed; and soon after went on with laborers, oxen, cows, farming utensils, and carpenters' tools. A Missionary house was built, and a school was opened. Sixteen Indian youths attended the school the last season. Their progress in learning to read our language is very pleasing. He has preached to the Indians, by an Interpreter. Five have been hopefully converted. The nation generally appears friendly to the mission. He has not known an instance of intoxication among them, since they adopted his proposal to lay aside the use of spiritous liquor.—For the support of this mission, the Trustees of the Massachusetts Missionary Society have appropriated the present year $.200.—Should this mission be prospered, it will probably open the door for the spread of the Gospel among nearly 50,000 Indians in that vicinity.—May we not hope the time is at hand, when Jesus shall have the *Heathen* for his inheritance?—It is expected that a full account of this mission will soon be given to the public in the Panoplist.

Extract of a letter from a person in Clinton county, State of New-York, to a clergyman in the vicinity, dated May 5, 1808.

My dear Friend,

I consider you to be a lover of Jesus; therefore I am sure you will rejoice to hear, that I, a poor prodigal, have returned to our heavenly Father. I saw and felt that the vain husks of sensual enjoyments could not satisfy the unbounded desires of my immortal soul; nor yield me one drop of real joy. While the thought that God was my enemy, and that he might justly send me the next moment to endless misery, often filled me with such horror as I could scarce endure. I often wished that I could be annihilated. When I was 16 years old, I had very powerful convictions; and was resolved to seek eternal life, let it cost what it would. Accordingly I banished myself from society, and read and prayed continually for six months. But I did not find peace as I expected: nor is it any wonder; for I sought salvation by the works of the law. At last, my mind became so darkened, and filled with such a flood of temptations, as to disbelieve the Scriptures, and entertain thoughts dishonorable of God; so that I could not bear to read any more. I was extremely miserable, and felt such horrors of conscience as cannot be described. My convictions wore off by degrees; and I became almost an atheist. I was left of the Spirit of God for eight years: although I would sometimes think the Scriptures may possibly be true; and if they are, what an awful situation I am in!—About two years since, the Spirit of God began to breathe on me again. My mind was opened gradually to believe; but still I felt a proud enmity of heart against God and holiness. But my conscience was awakened, and I was sensible my nature must be changed by the power of God, before I could love him, and feel peace of mind.—My convictions kept increasing until the 26th of March, when I felt so burdened with a sense of my guilt, and the awfulness of my situation as a justly condemned sinner, that my limbs could scarce support me. At that time, when all hope seemed to be gone, except a faint glimmering that the blessed Jesus, whom I had so often despised, would have mercy on me, I felt ashamed to apply to him. But I was constrained to bow and adore him as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world. In a mo-

ment, my soul was set at liberty; and I felt a calmness and serenity of mind entirely new to me. From that time, my peace and confidence in God gradually increased; but at times, the tempter would come with a flood of temptations. Thanks to God, I was enabled to resist them. Last Sabbath, I joined the Presbyterian church of Christ in this place. I felt solemn while partaking of the sacrament, and a desire to forsake all for Christ; but my affections were not moved. After meeting, I went to - - - - -. I had not been there long, before I was so filled with the love of Jesus, that it almost overcame my nature. Oh how unbounded did his love appear; and how wonderful his compassion in singling me out from so many hundreds around me, who seem to be quite unconcerned. My dear friend, I cannot tell you, for words are too feeble to express the sweet and transporting sensations which I then enjoyed. Since that, I feel a full confidence that my name is written in the Lamb's book of life; and a desire to publish to all around what great things Jesus has done for me; and to tell poor sinners what fulness there is in the Savior, for all who will go to him; and how much happiness they lose by withholding their hearts; also what awful misery they are exposed to, while out of Christ.—Oh help me, my friend, to sing hallelujahs to our glorious Savior, whose grace and mercy appear unbounded as eternity; and his love, which he sheds abroad in the heart, is able to satisfy the boundless desires of the immortal soul. I now feel that the Scriptures are true, and that God is love. My former doubts of the reality of religion are vanished; and I can venture an eternity on the promises of God.—Pray for me, that I may always keep near my Savior, and feel the streams of his love flowing continually into my soul.—I hope God is about to pour down his Spirit on the people of this place. A number appear to be awakened. O that the heavenly work may spread, until the whole earth is deluged with the grace of God.—Do write and give me all that instruction and advice which young Christians need.—Please to give my respects to all my acquaintance at C-------; tell them I have found Jesus, or rather he has found me, and that not the thousandth part was ever told me of the loveliness and glory of the Redeemer, which I have seen and felt.

[*In a late number of the Repository, the Hon. John Norris, of Salem, was mentioned as one of the associate founders of the Theological Institution at Andover. In addition to the* 10,000 *there mentioned, he gave* 1000 *dollars towards purchasing a Library for the use of the students. As this worthy and generous benefactor of the Institution has lately been called from our world, the following extract of a letter, which he wrote to a clergyman in New-Hampshire, nearly a year since, may be gratifying to the friends of religion.*]

——"We have been led, in the course of divine providence, in a path which we did not see, when we first contemplated this great object. God's ways and providences are wonderful; and we are now brought into that path, which we hope and trust is God's direction, and will be for his glory, a union with Andover Corporation.—I have made my offering, and signed the constitution; and I hope and trust with uprightness of soul and godly sincerity—an offering to my Savior, which I hope he will own and bless. O may this Institution be his, and owned and blessed by him for his own glory. My dear friend, let us hope and pray that the ministers of Jesus, his dear church and people, may be refreshed by the streams from this great Institution."

Solemn Warning to Profane Swearers.

AN awful and melancholy instance of the power of Almighty God in punishing with exemplary vengeance the presumptuous wretch, who dares bid defiance to HIM, in whom he lives, moves, and has his existence.

A young man wished to join a company of volunteers, now enrolling themselves, for the purpose of offering their services to the President of the United States, and yesterday being Sabbath, he was at a neighbor's house with some other young persons, a part of whom were remonstrating against his intentions—He said he would go and join, in spite of all the friends he had, and said he did not believe it was in the power of God Almighty to prevent him. This dreadful expression had scarcely escaped his lips, when he fell, a lifeless corpse, at the feet of his advisers, and never breathed more. Before that period, he enjoyed a perfect state of health.

Jonesborough, (Virginia) Aug. 24, 1807.

Extracts from an account of a revival of religion in Hartford, (West Division) in Connecticut.

[From the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine]

IN the year 1799, there was a very extraordinary work of God's grace among us. It continued about a year and a half. More than 100 obtained a hope of a blessed immortality, and joined themselves to the communion of the church.

In the year 1807, several persons obtained a hope, and were added to the church.

In 1808, it pleased the God of all grace again to visit us with the effusions of his blessed Spirit; and a great revival of religion took place. It was spread over the whole congregation. The visible effects were great. The worshipping assemblies of God's people were crouded. A great solemnity and seriousness were diffused over them. Several public religious meetings, during the week, were desired to be instituted; and they were full. The people were anxious to hear the truth of God out of his word. They were all attention and solemnity. The divine gracious presence seemed to be enjoyed. The work commenced in the beginning of the month of May, and still continues, and is, we judge, increasing. May it further progress, and continue, and visit each heart and family. It is mostly among the youth. We have already had upwards of forty added to the Lord by a public profession of religion, who hope that they have experienced a renovation of heart. About twenty more have recently obtained a hope of salvation. And thirty perhaps are still exercised with deep conviction: and we find, from time to time, instances anew of persons brought to consider their ways, and to inquire what they shall do to be saved.

The most who have obtained a hope, were three, four, and five months under deep convictions. Their distress of mind was very great. As many as twenty, even now, after eight months, are still exercised with strong convictions, and are in great anguish of conscience.

Pleasing is the thought, that in our country, and in this State, the past year has been greatly distinguished by many revivals of religion. NATHAN PERKINS.

West Hartford, Jan. 2, 1809.

In Wintonbury, there has been, and is now, a great revival of religion. Forty have obtained a hope, and join-

ed the church; and a number are under deep conviction. The work appears to be progressing.

In East Hartford, forty-three have obtained a hope; twenty-five are under deep conviction, and numbers are very thoughtful. The work here also is progressing.

In East Windsor (Scantic Society) there is a revival begun; eighteen have joined the church; eight or ten more have obtained a hope, and will probably join the church.

Rev. Mr. Church's Mission.

[We have received the following remarks, from the Rev. Mr. Church, on his mission into the northern counties of the State of New-York. We have not yet received his journal; but we hasten to publish these seasonable remarks for the information of the public, and to shew the friends of Zion that their exertions to send the Gospel to the destitute are not misapplied, nor ineffectual. Perhaps Mr. Church's journal may be published in a future number.]

EDITORS.

DURING my whole journey, I experienced very kind attention. People were glad to entertain me; and readily made exertions to promote the object of my mission.

I fully believe that great good has been done by Missionary labors in the new settlements. In the northern part of the State of New-York, 8 churches have been formed and 3 ministers settled, within 3 or 4 years. These towns are new; and the people would have been destitute of the religious privileges they now enjoy, had it not been for missionary efforts. They feel themselves much indebted to those who have contributed to their assistance. In other places, the attention of people has been called up to the things of futurity, and they feel, more than they otherwise would have done, the importance of enjoying the gospel ministry. Furnishing the people in the new settlements with preaching does not make them careless and negligent about supporting the gospel ministry; but it has a very different effect. They feel more sensibly their need of the stated means of grace. Were they to be wholly neglected, the probability is, they would become more and more indifferent towards the gospel and its precious institutions. Every person of discernment must have observed, how readily people will form a strong habit of neglecting the gospel,

and profaning the Sabbath, if nothing be done to prevent it. How often are societies torn to pieces for the want of seasonable, religious instruction.

Previous to my journey, I had a very inadequate idea of the circumstances of the people in the new settlements. I found them in greater need of assistance, than I had before conceived. Many families with little property, have removed into the wilderness, and are struggling hard to pay for their land and provide a comfortable support. They find it difficult to maintain schools for their children, a very small part of the time. And the children are in great want of books, especially Bibles. In some places, the people live quite scattered; and in others, they have been so divided by Sectarians, that there are but a few to unite for the support of gospel order.

Jesus Christ has sheep scattered about in the wilderness. These must be fed. But how? By the liberality of others; for miracles are not to be expected. And to those, who know the love of Christ, it must be a precious privilege, to edify and comfort some of his people, and help them to heaven.

There are many precious souls in the wilderness, that, humanly speaking, must be forever lost, except others furnish them with the means of salvation. And who shall perform the kind and benevolent deed? Why not we? How much has been done for our salvation? How much has Jesus done for us, while sinners and enemies? He became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be rich. Some say, "Let the people in the new settlements furnish themselves with the means of salvation." But what would have been our condition, if the blessed Redeemer had said so respecting us? We should have been *without Christ, without hope, and without God*, in the world. How can we be grateful for our privileges, except we have bowels of compassion to the destitute and perishing?

Missionary labors are highly necessary and important to keep alive, in the minds of numbers, a sense of a future state of retribution. It was mentioned to me, in my journey, that people who were sober and moral in New England, became licentious on going into the wilderness. They lay aside very much both the fear of God and man, and do that which seems right in their own eyes. Can we hope they will be reclaimed without means?

I am grieved to hear so many objections raised against the missionary cause. I very much fear they all originate in selfishness. What an abominable sin is covetousness! It shuts our hearts and closes our hands against the wants of perishing sinners. And to excuse ourselves, we frame numerous objections. Some, for one trifling reason, and some, for another, will object against contributing to save their fellow men from eternal death. But why can't we trust our money in the bank of Heaven? Let us give to the Lord, to support and prosper his cause, and in the world to come, we shall receive an hundredfold. How joyful it will be to meet those in heaven whom we have been instrumental of saving from endless perdition. *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*

Poetry.

A Prayer for success to Missions.

GREAT God of glory, show thy face,
And crown our efforts with thy grace;
In heathen lands thy gospel bless,
And here secure its large increase.

Let Jews and Gentiles, bond and free,
Embrace salvation, Lord, by thee;
While those who now in darkness dwell,
Deliv'rance sing from guilt and hell.

Millions there are on heathen ground,
Who never heard the gospel's sound;
Oh, send it forth, and let it run,
Swift and reviving as the sun.

Oh, look on those, who stand to tell
Sinners the way that leads from hell;
Guide thou their lips, their hearts unite,
Teach them to act as in thy sight.

To those who give, do thou impart
A gen'rous, wise, and tender heart;
LORD, crown their zeal, reward their care,
That in thy grace they all may share.

Let many stand around thy throne;
From diff'rent climes, let many own,
The banner of the cross unfurl'd,
Has sav'd from hell a ruin'd world.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

The following lines, written by one destitute of the advantages of a liberal education, and but little experienced in works of composition, is, with diffidence, submitted to your examination; and should they appear worthy of a place, you will please to insert them in your Religious Repository.

The Sinner's Call.

Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men.
SOLOMON.

HEAR ye the voice of Wisdom at the gates,
At ev'ry corner, and in all the streets;
To you, O men, and sons of men, I call:
My voice has ever echo'd since the fall.
Behold, my ancient seers and prophets were
By me inspir'd, what precepts to declare;
Thus, all their proclamations were the same,
As though directly from my lips they came.
Behold, my modern consecrated band
Is straightway sent, with this express command:
"Go, and proclaim to all, in ev'ry place,
Repent, and turn from sin to right'ousness."
Thus oft have you been call'd, in solemn word,
By those who had their message from the Lord;
And if, from them, you turn away your eyes,
It is not man, but God, that you despise.
Have not I often fill'd your wond'ring ears
With most alarming sounds?—Have not your fears
Been oft awaken'd, when my works aloud
Have spoke destruction, and all nature bow'd?
When storms and tempests rage, with dreadful sound,
Wide o'er the land; when earthquakes rend the ground;
When bolts of thunder through the sky are hurl'd,
Or strange convulsions shake the solid world;
'Tis but my voice that echoes in your ears;
And where's the wretch, so void of sense and fears,
Who stands immov'd when he such warnings hears?
My Holy Spirit calls you oft within,
With milder voice, to flee from wrath and sin:
And O that you would to this voice attend,
And thus your vain and wicked ways amend.
But if these admonitions you refuse,
And your own certain reprobation chuse,
Then go, pursue the pleasures you design,
And cheer your hearts with sordid mirth and wine;
Taste the delights your vitious souls desire,
And give a loose to all your carnal fire:
But know, all ye that have your God thus dar'd,
For you there is a dreadful hell prepar'd.

DIFFIDENCE.